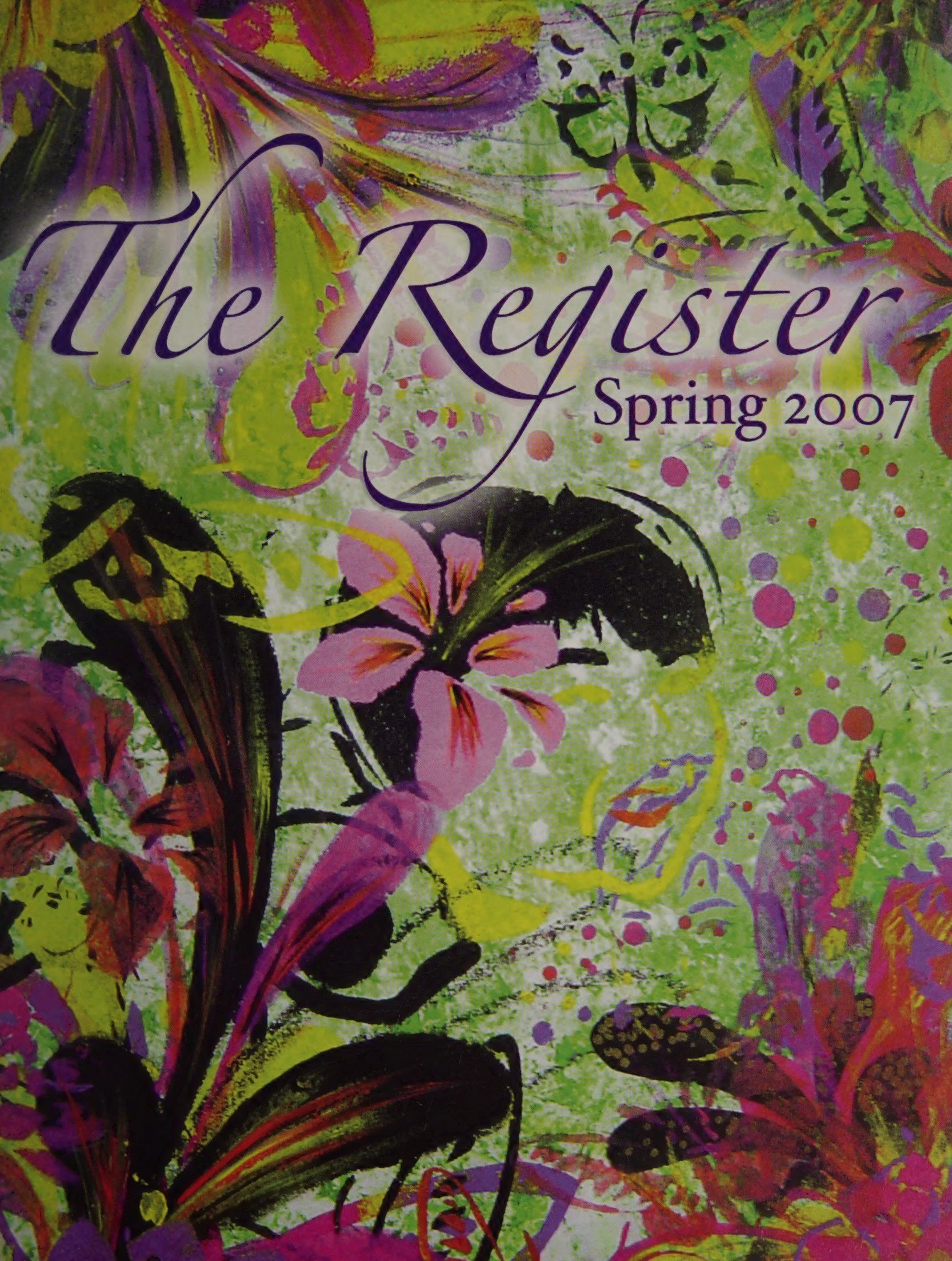
The Register
Spring 2007

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i want to follow you

~a response to e. e. cummings' "somewhere i have never traveled"~

i want to follow you through the driest deserts and
into the darkest storms, (you have no idea
what i would give for you to see me) i notice
every movement, every glance and accidental

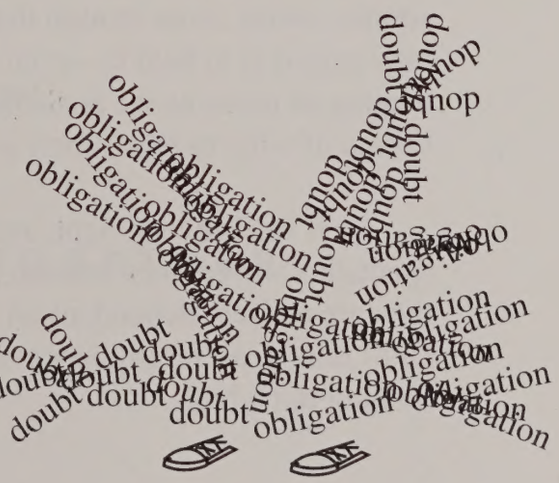
touch; my words are clumsy, and i falter when
i get close enough to hear the whispers in
your head, each time i approach, my feet are
lost in the undergrowth of doubt and obligation

but if a chance lay on the ocean floor, beneath
infinite depths of unknown, i would gladly retrieve
it (because a chance, though only a chance, is
more than what i now have, it is more than

nothing) maybe if i was not so helpless, so
incapable of forcing myself upon the world, of
discerning the endless possibilities that
unravel my mind to the point of losing composure

i wish i could tell you that i see in you what no
one else will ever see, sometimes i feel you already
know, since fear has peeled back my thick skin to
reveal all that is left beneath: thoughts of you

- Michelle Paige, II



Alzheimer's

For my grandmother, Mary Fallavollita

It is not the loss of memory. It is the loss of life—of a life. It is the failure of the mind, and, eventually, the body. It is the end—the desire of the end—the incomprehensible need for everything to be over. It is empty gray eyes. The rancid smell of urine-soaked sheets and latex gloves—and rotting flesh. The inability to lift a spoon to dry, cracked lips. Bones once strong enough to carry crying grandchildren are now brittle and frail—once full cheeks are hollow—and that warm laugh has become an indecipherable murmur.

It does not afflict a single person—rather, an entire family. Every day it rips people away from those they love—slowly at first—and then fast, like a magician removing a tablecloth; except friends and family come crashing down with dishes and silverware—and like fragile wine glasses and crystal plates, they shatter. They are left alone to pick up the jagged pieces and to try to sort out what's left of their broken lives.

It sends regret to creep up the spine and bite the neck with sharp white teeth; lethal poison inundates the mind with "what-ifs" and "could-haves"—with every lost opportunity—every unsaid word.

There is mourning, but it is not the same as grief; with grief there is at least closure. There is no solace in anticipating the stuffy air of funeral homes—not even the sweet-spice scent of Church. There is no grave, no headstone, even though she has been gone for over a year. There are hot tears, but it is too dangerous to let them fall—allowing them to stain red cheeks is recognizing everything that has been so desperately ignored.

It is a cliché: they will always live inside our hearts. It's hard to move on when something hurts—physically hurts—but there is no other option. Years from now they won't be remembered this way—sick and dying—because that's not who they are. There are always anecdotes—paraphrases of personalities and habits—to remember them by. Memories don't simply vanish, even though that's what this thing—this monster—is supposed to be. It's ironic how easy it is to beat it—even without a cure; the only way to fight losing memories is by making as many as we possibly can—and by promising not to forget those who weren't given a choice of what to remember; we cannot forget. I will never forget.

It steals every sight, and word, and face—every idea. It forces us to watch, as helpless spectators, loved ones unlearn a life's worth of lessons until they reach a state of infancy—until they are entirely dependent on strangers. Until we rather see them die than continue suffering. Until finally, all resemblance of life fades away—like a name written in pencil, rubbed until it is nothing but a blur.

- Michelle Paige, II

Written Noise

A
slowly
moving
crescendo
that transcends
into the most
FIERCE FORTE.

The trumpets ***blaring***
and the P.E.R.C.U.S.S.I.O.N
BANG.
tap.
tap.
guiding the s t r i n g s and the
woodwinds into the song that
promotes the sensation of

Swaying

soft. lilting. gentle.
are the piccollos
that at first go out
in an unnoticed
(hush hush)
flick of the fingers
and then with close
listening, you are able
to hear...
the gentle rustling of
black tailored jackets
and skirts that flow down
and the whipping of the
baton in the conductor's
hand is an orchestra
within the orchestra...
the concerto grosso
with the concertino
and the tutti (all together now)
creating a wondrous
sound of wholeness.
For minutes that seem
L I K E H O U R S A L L R U N N I N G T O G E T H E R
until...
until...

it is done...
and the standing ovation follows.

- Justine Otero, IV

The Orator

He looked down at the note cards in his hand, and felt a rush of excitement run through him. This, his speech, which he had worked on so carefully for the past three weeks, these were his words. He was prepared, if not a little bit bored at the moment, waiting for his turn at the podium.

The man turned his gaze back to the blonde woman who was now stammering through something about the effect of contrast in photography. Her speech—if you could even give it the dignity of calling it that—was a mess of long words and adjectives, mouthfuls of run-on sentences that skidded to a screechy halt. He shook his head. Why did people who could not write a decent paragraph even bother being features at seminars?

The woman finished shakily and hurried back to her seat amidst lukewarm applause. The man sighed. She had been number five on the list, and he was number nine. Three more horrible speeches to go and then, finally, it would be his turn to stride across the stage and save this photography seminar from the evils of dreadful orators.

Through the next three speeches—which all turned out to be either poorly written or poorly presented—the man fiddled with his note cards. Why was it that he—the brilliant orator that he was, had to give speeches at conferences where he was the only superior one there? Didn't the public recognize his talent? Why didn't they beg him to speak at packed halls, where only the educated and the wealthy were permitted to attend?

He remembered the first time he had ever given a speech before. He had been 10, 9 perhaps…He had stood on a chair, the easier to be seen, and had started to speak, in his loud strong voice, that seemed to echo off the walls and the linoleum floor. The man could still remember the look of awe he had produced on the faces of his mother and father. At least he thought it had been awe…?

He heard his name called. The audience turned towards him, hoping that he would not give a speech as bad as the ones before. The man strode across the stage and took his place at the podium. "Good evening," he said and looked down at his note cards, ready to begin. Then he froze. He had brought the note cards from last year's speech with him by mistake.

-Adriana Lasso-Harrier, V

Um Beijo

For Dujuan Wright
In memory of the Portuguese Poet,
Eugenio de Andrade
(Portuguese words are excerpts from his piece "On the Eve of Water")

When I was lost in
As palavres interditas
-Forbidden Words-
I had become one with
Foreign syllables
But not unheard of
Surges of life-learned lessons
Of love, of lust, of
Desire, a
Path to choose; to be chosen

Um beijo aberto na sombra
-An open kiss in the shadows-
As tudo lhe doia
As -everything aches within-
And then up rose
A wave, of flowering cognizance
Of days, of moments
Missed—memories that drop;
That dribble off of desire-swollen lips
Slipping out with lovesick sips
Passion that not only caresses,
But rips through ribs
Thus reminded by a gone wise-man's rhetoric
Of him, of—his—
It lasts,
The longing of my past—it
Happened so fast
So fast…
-So strong was his desire-
E de tanto que lhes queria
Ad it spread like fire
Still, today,
The blazing doesn't tire

And this wise man—this stranger-yet-kin
Sang the tempo
Sang the exact sweet
Cantation

And oration of
Past/present romantic situation
With a lover—a love

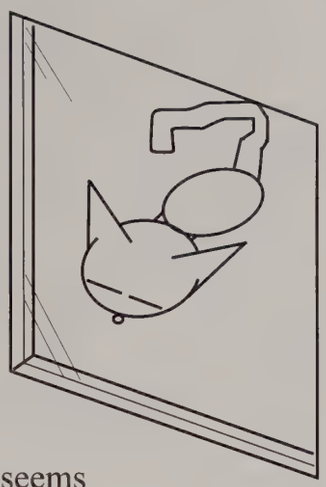
He holds my sweetness
On his tongue
On his words
And I lunge
Into this ocean of
Full bloom hedonistic reminiscence
I just remember
A booming, blooming joy, a
Paradise becoming one with my bones
Tudo lhe doia
-Everything ached within-
And the undertones of
His body making his abode
In mine
Amidst the white noise of
Rolling thunder and wind chimes
In the passion instilled undercurrent
We begin becoming
And
O tempo ordido
-time burning-
We become beings
Our bodies—the paint
Making murals of myriads of
Dreams—of fantasies
Our canvas—the sheets
Swimming, living in strokes
As yet as much as
We take from what is
Real
Life shakes us from her
Senses
Feeling the physical boundaries fade away
And boundless, we become
Senseless
Fierce gentility—more of a
Decadent battle in love
De tanto que lhes queria
E, o tempo ordido
Tudo lhe doia
O, my love
-So strong was his desire
So strong is his desire

-And time burning-

-Everything ached within-
Everything aches within
And, all aflame
I ache with him

- Dianna Willard, III

A WILLING SLAVE TO CURIOSITY



"Only
the curious have,
if they live, a tale worth
telling at all."

—Alastair Reid

Crash. Oh. So *that's* what happens when you push a vase off the table. It breaks into a myriad of shiny pieces. Cool.

I notice that there's light glinting off the tiny mirrors. I follow it. It seems to be coming from one source…I can see through this source. Where does the light come from?

I scratch the clear pane. Nothing happens. Aha! So this is some kind of barrier that stands between me and my ultimate destination. The first obstacle on my path to success. I can let it be. I can walk away from it and never see what lies beyond. But what's the fun in that?

I examine the wall more closely. It has a smooth, reflective surface. Very similar to the vase I have just broken. So if *this* is made of the same material…it can also be broken.

But how? I can't just push this pane to make it fall. There has to be another way. To break something requires force. The force of a floor shattered the vase. How can I take the force of a floor and use it to break this barrier?

I have to throw something at it. The force of the fall in the force of a throw. But what is possibly strong enough to break this barrier? It feels thicker than the vase. I ponder my dilemma for a while before coming to a conclusion.

There's only one thing I can throw hard enough to conquer this obstacle. Myself.

I go back as far as I can. The further away, the stronger the force. I have to do this right. I have to find the light.

I begin to run towards the barrier. Speed creates force. Force begets success. Success breeds satisfaction. At the last moment, I jump. I soar towards the barrier, bracing myself for the impact. I can already taste the satisfaction…

Crash. I know no more.

When I awake, I hear voices. "That stupid cat broke my priceless vase! What *is* her problem?"

"Look! She knocked herself out somehow…"

"Did she run into the *window*?"

There's laughter. They're mocking my noble effort! But I do not get too offended. After all, *they* never had my experience. They'll never know. They'll never get that taste of satisfaction on the brink of success.

So where does the light come from? I still don't know. But I'll do whatever it takes to find out. Oh, what a story it will be…I can already feel the glory, the satisfaction.

I cannot live without curiosity.

- Maya Stroshane, I

La Frontière

At the border, a young man in a tidy button down leans out his Plexiglas window and says, "Bonjour, Hello." My mother says, "Bonjour!" because she likes to pretend she can speak French, and hands over our passports. I feign sleep, slumped down in my seat with headphones stuffed in my ears. One eye is peeled on the dull plastic terminals through which cars are streaming easily, because in all honesty, I wouldn't miss this for anything. I think: *this is the beginning of an entirely different place.* It's gray out, but warm, and the young man's shirt has short sleeves. He asks very politely, his accent little more than something pushing slightly at the end of his words, "Do you have any guns in the car? Illegal substances? Where are you from? What are you doing in Quebec, how long are you staying?" He doesn't come out from his booth, and we leave him within the minute.

At first the highway is the same, the cracked asphalt and wooded areas framing the road seeming like another extension of Vermont. And then the mountains shrink into hills, and the hills disappear, and everything is just flat for miles and miles. It looks the way Nebraska has always looked in my head. A corn field goes forever on the right, silos stretching up in the provincial horizon, and ten-year-olds on tractors bat at crows from the wheat with sticks. A statue of the Virgin stands as tall as a man next to a little red farm house. A small metallic Catholic church springs out of the flatlands. Solitary houses with broken porches turn into a town of them, broken by a building proclaiming *Librairie Erotique*. We laugh for miles. The woman on the radio speaks fast French and plays Jay-Z. Soon we are navigating a complicated series of circular highways and bridges, speeding over the St. Laurence. And there Montréal spreads in a semicircular mess, built into a mountain crowned by a giant cross. All the houses wear spiraling staircases and flower boxes, little sidewalk cafes overflow with women in YSL, slick businessmen, the same dose of Lebanese and Italian takeout as in any city. A billboard: two men, one in a leather jacket, and another in a suit, braced against explosions and the backdrop of a maple leaf spliced together with a fleur-de-lis. They are headlined by *"Bon Cop, Bad Cop"*.

And we know we are in some lost part of Europe, a cross section of the American prairies and the Parisian cobbles under our feet. Most everyone speaks like we do but there's something humid about the way they do it. We ride a car on a cable up to the top of the city. An old woman on the Métro speaks to me, and when I shrug, we find out we don't have the languages to make sense to each other. So we just smile, helpless.

****

At the border a fat man in an official border patrol uniform flashes a narcotics badge at us and says, "Passports." Next to his booth, fastened to the metal of the terminal, and covered in flowers and ribbons, is a sign that says, "9/11/01; We Will Never Forget." We have been waiting nearly forty-five minutes, crammed in between tourists and countrymen and cars of every color, the fastenings on our seatbelts baking in the sun. We are tired and bloated on truffles and neon signs that flash all night, and my little brother shifts his body into different positions every five seconds. My mother sighs ruefully, saying, "Thank you," as he hands back our documents. He spits, "Yeah," and waves us through, and somehow I feel annoyed, but better annoyed, like: this is *my* annoyed.

In America, the prairies are gone. Mountains grow again, and we are followed by outlet malls. A little clapboard congregational church is hidden by the forest, humble, and blending into the foliage.

Nothing we can see for miles and miles reaches anywhere towards the sky but for the gentlest of Mountains and notches. White River Junction pulls us into New England, mom and pop storefronts and bubbling waterfalls, old clacking railroad cars permanently lodged at the crossing in the middle of town. We stop in the Whitewater Deli, next to the law offices of David M. Sunshine, Esquire. The bored girl behind the counter takes our orders without asking us where we're from, even if I can tell she knows we aren't local. My mother sits us next to the window in the sun. Outside the mountains are huge and purple-green. The waitress brings our sandwiches saying, "Here you are," and the language she's speaking belongs to us, too.

In the car, I fall steadily into sleep, Mi-chelle Norris murmuring there. Some invisible equilibrium returns in my ears as the signs lead us towards Massachusetts. It begins to rain, the driving sheets pushing us closer and closer, and blending the landscape into a teary mess.

We are on our side of the border, but we aren't home yet.

-Roisin Foley, II

THE RAILROAD

THE RAILROAD

Steam and sounds
of iron clanking and screeching
fill the air.
It's busy and they sit
on the edge of the
Railroad yard.
The little girl excitedly looks
through the fence and steam
and watches the people and trains
hustle about.
The girl likes the trains but the mother doesn't.
She is scared of the big belching monsters
And instead looks pessimistically
down the street,
the book and the sleeping dog
lay forgotten in her lap.
She is perhaps waiting for someone
from her past.
The girl looks eagerly
to the future
but the mother doesn't want to leave the past.

Later, they'll go home
the girl will be on the
floor, playing with her train
and dreaming of the future.
But *she'll* sit in a chair by the window;
the puppy has escaped from her
melancholy haze
and plays with the girl.
But the book is still forgotten on her lap as
She sits and dreams of that someone.

- Caitlin Walsh, I

As the Hours Passed

Interpretation of what the two Australian miners felt as they were trapped in the collapsed mine.

It was dark.
I was cold.

I was going to die.

Nothing seemed to really matter anymore,
Because I knew I would never get out alive,
I knew I would never see my family again,
I would never see the light of day

As the hours passed
We found ourselves dangling to life by a loose thread
That could snap at any moment
And plunge us into eternal darkness.

During the first few days, I didn't worry.

After all, there was time,
There was plenty of time.
They would find us.

It never dawned on me to question who "they" were,
It never really seemed to matter to me
Until it was too late

We knew that we could never reach that far
Far above 3,000 feet of collapsed brick
To reach those who might have a chance
To help us,
To save us

I don't remember how we got in
Nor can I remember how we got out

But I can remember every day with clear detail
Because I am still alive
And Knight, Knight is dead

Help was coming
Or maybe it already came
I wouldn't know
All I knew was that there was
A few more hours to pass

And the light of tomorrow
Seems to be the light of yesterday
While today, the day in question
Puts us in the dark

Fourteen days underground—
Fourteen days and still breathing

I lost count after fifteen.

- Lisa Wang, IV

Beyond the Noise

Weariness rapidly filled my heart, sharp clanging of empty misses ruptured my eardrums, and it took all of my willpower not to just drop down right where I stood. Hatred and rage and violence can only take you so far until you get tired and sick of it all, and it has sapped all possible strength from both your mind and body. I constantly had to remind myself that I was fighting for my country and that I should be proud of my offered protection, or at least, what they told us was protection. But I wasn't. I was sick and tired and hungry and thirsty and hurting and homesick and everything else you could possibly be. I didn't want to battle it out anymore.

I glanced quickly over at my comrades, words dying in my mouth when I found the majority of them dead. The madness never reached my eyes. I just didn't care anymore; I didn't have the energy or the heart to mourn for every fallen soldier or civilian. And anyway, I liked to believe that they were in a better place now. I really liked to think that.

The screams of my unit commander gradually infiltrated the haze in which I had enveloped myself in. It was the call for retreat, to pull back, but I was too wasted to feel much of anything significantly or even relatively memorable. Bombs were going off around me, and various bullets whizzed through the air past my head. I'd always thought that it was a miracle I wasn't hit that time. But then I started to think, why should I even care anymore? The earth-shattering walls of children screeching words that I would never be able to understand penetrated the deafening pandemonium. That reminded me of why this was where I stood, why I kept going. Hopefully, there was some kind of greater good that I was fighting for here.

Positioning my eyes and my gun just above the level of the ground, my burned out sight still managed to pick and eliminate countless targets, most likely missing even more than that; and always, the constant noise of bullet propulsion humming almost contentedly in the background. After mere seconds, my arms began to ache with the weight of the M-17. Drifting off to sleep again became a very appealing option. As my eyelids began to close, I caught sight of a sniper. He was trained, I could tell, and had absolutely no trouble shooting at me and my fellow privates, just as I had no trouble shooting at him and his partners. I squinted through the raised dust, dropping my shoulder as I was trained, in order to get a leveled field. I never looked to the gunner's face. It was something I never did when I fired. My finger pulled back heavily on the trigger. I didn't see, only heard the piece of metal shatter a wall, failed.

I raised my head a little further and accidentally met the gaze of the man that made me wish so much to commit a homicide. His bright irises shone with life, with a melancholy and dejected passion that could have been something utterly remarkable, given the chance. They sparkled with guilt, with the overpowering need and instinct to survive, but also with the desire to just give up. It was then that I realized that I saw my own eyes in this soldier's face; how alike we were. Or was it really just my own heart reflecting in his now empty carcass? I understood that he could comprehend the similarities between us in that single instant, just as I could.

But it was too late, as everything in this world seems to be. I had already fired, and this time, I knew that my carbonized bullet would pierce partially wanting flesh. He fell lifeless to the ground, and I stood then, surveying the damage as open fire ceased. I almost felt sorry for him, before I remembered to forget. There were too many like him to recall them all, to feel for them all.

But at least we had seen one another over the chaos of battle.
At least our eyes had met over the din.

- Patricia Cahill, IV

ONE FOUR-HUNDRED-THOUSANDTH

It's pretty ugly.
Some parts missing,
Most parts broken –
A parody of what it used to be.

Left behind by those fleeing,
It wears the remains of a little red shirt and little red pants,
And lies inanimately among the abandoned possessions
And the toppled furniture.

It used to be a little Darfurian boy.

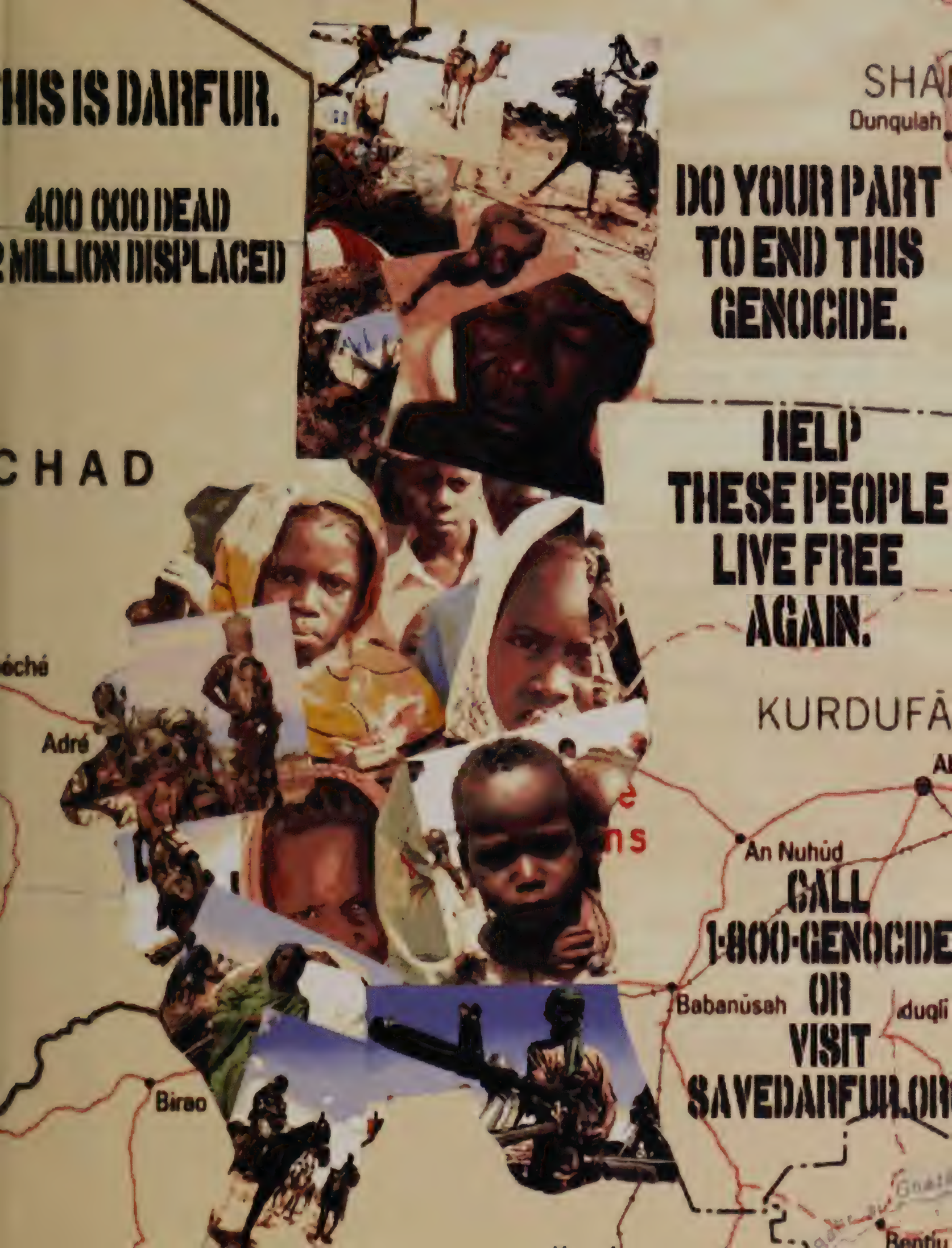
He must have been a pretty evil little boy
Because they smashed his face in,
Left him dead
Among the pots.

You know what they say –
Injustice is blind.

He is one-four-hundred-thousandth of the genocide in Darfur,
And flies have started crawling on him,
Eating him.
But for a little boy, he's pretty quiet now.
He doesn't protest.

Yet in the silence,
His innocent voice seems to ask
I wonder why
No one cares.

-Evan Kelner-Levine, II


THIS IS DARFUR.
400 000 DEAD
2 MILLION DISPLACED
DO YOUR PART
TO END THIS
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HELP
THESE PEOPLE
LIVE FREE
AGAIN.
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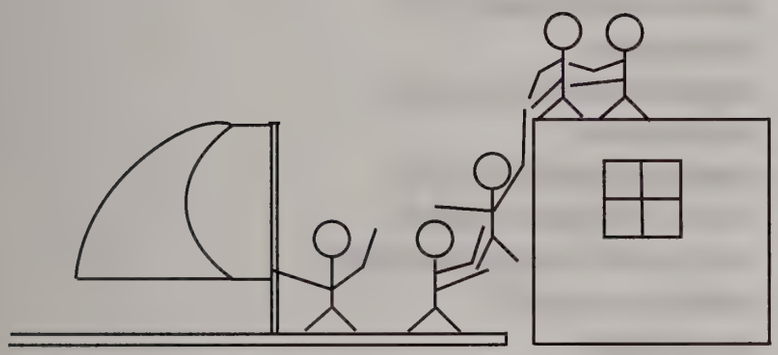
SHA
Dunqulah
KURDUFA
An Nuhúd
Babanúsah
Birao
Adré

Rwandan Reflection

What makes me so different from a Rwandan?
Am I taller?
Am I bigger?
Is my skin that much lighter?
Why am I alive and almost a million of
Them dead?
Is my life more valuable than theirs?
Hundreds of miles away?
In another country?
Full of opportunity?
There are United States of America,
Why can't there be the United States of
Africa?
Is it possible to have a United Kingdom
Of Africa?
Why do I care so much?
Because it could've been me.
How can I not pay attention?
These are my brothers and sisters being killed every
Day.

I wish they were Niggers.
I said I wish they were Niggers.
For, in a time like this, 'tis better to be
A Nigger, than to be an AFRICAN.
Do I look like a Hutu?
Or do I look more Tutsi?
Please don't kill me,
For I have nothing to offer you
But the jewelry on my person
And my body.
Take me!
Do what you want!
My fate is sealed
By those who sit in office and order
"Don't Shoot."
At least those bastards said something.
Americans wouldn't call it the
"G" word for a while.
I don't have to scream murder
For it to be murder.
Why be reluctant to help people who
Need it the most?

I wish there was a Hurricane Rwanda
Instead of the Rwandan Genocide.
Then maybe we can use the rafts
Clinton sent
To help get the Tutsi and Hutu refugees
Off the roofs of their houses.
But such things are fantasy.
Like the Holocaust, right?
"Never Again," my ass.
What if something like that happens in Haiti
Tomorrow?
It could've been me.
I can say "Never Again" to detention in high school,
And not one more day will be served.
I can say "Never Again" to violence at Virginia Tech,
And not one more shot will be fired.
I can not say "Never Again" to genocide,
Because it keeps happening:
Cambodia,



Somalia,
Germany,
Austria,
Dominican Republic,
Rwanda,
Darfur
What's next?
Let me know,
So I can hide the victims.
Let me know,
So I can fit it in the budget.
Let me know,
So I can spread awareness
Before a single life is lost.
Somebody please let me know.
Give me a location,
General area.
This is more than cheating on a test,
This is cheating the next genocide.

-Erica Moise, II

The Register

Floating BACK TO EARTH

My last grandmother lived in a salmon colored art-deco apartment building on Ocean Parkway in Brooklyn. At seven years old, traveling to see her was euphoric. Right before major holidays, my father would settle behind the wheel, my mother squished in the front between her bags of provisions for the trip, and I would curl asleep in a nest of pillows as we prepared for the journey.

Gilded in reflective green steel, the "Welcome to New York" sign brought forth a hurricane of anticipation. Not even the monotonous crawl of mid-day traffic could dampen my expectation—expectation of a big, unknown city, of frivolous spending, of that warm, bony hug from granny Rozelle.

We rode up in a dawdling elevator, its walls encrusted in fifty years of gossip, and the floor slathered with the residue of ten thousand weather patterns. She was standing in the hall when we finally arrived, sharp red lipstick piercing her pale, blemished skin, rotting pink slippers decomposing into the stained linoleum, and a titanic smile pointing right at her favorite grandson.

I treasured the visits I had with her when she was so alive. It's painful to compare this sharp, fiery woman with the one writhing in the chains of dementia. Before, she would usher us inside the rent-controlled penthouse. The fifties never died when she was decorating, and each chilly room was meticulously covered in kitsch and oak laminate. For some bizarre reason, my feet were always icy, no matter how many layers of socks I put on; decades of living in an empty house sucked the life out of it.

We would all lounge around the apartment, sharing gossip and grumpy comments about change. Change is scary. But as long as we were all together in that apartment, laughing and lamenting the world, we were untouched.

Late at night, when I was gripped in the strangle hold of sleep, the three of them would pack themselves onto the cast-iron day bed and watch T.V. I couldn't understand the plot, but lying at their feet, tangled in the sinuous dreads of the flokati flag, a feeling of completeness washed over me.

A few years later, Rozelle was far from complete. She lost herself in great chunks. She simply sat in the T.V. room of the rest home that insidiously sucked up every dime she'd saved for the last 30 years. She was drowning in her past, her eyes foggy and lost adrift in a convalescent ocean of vague recollections.

By the end of the show, my parents carried me into my grandmother's bed, where they slept, with me nestled firmly in the concave of their bodies. My grandmother slept on the day bed, with the eleven o'clock news murmuring gently in her ear, weaving stories about murders and thefts around her in flickering silhouettes of blue.

Later, I would grip her balmy hand, worn smooth and soft, and stare up in awe of the skyscrapers, disappearing into the clouds above. She'd look up, impartial. Grandma had watched the buildings go up; then, she watched them come down again, and new shinier ones replace them. To a wide-eyed child, the skyscrapers were immortal beings, incomprehensible in height and power. Rozelle knew they were mortal; they were all going to come down someday.

She was a skyscraper. She reached into the heavens, leaving me to stare up at her with awe. She was so strong. At my age, I couldn't imagine anything tearing her down. But she knew that like the buildings, she was mortal. Rozelle wouldn't be torn down without making sure she made everyone realize how strong her foundation was, plunging deep into the heart of the city.

But, after everything the world could throw at her was exhausted, she finally floated back to earth.

Burgundy

I bent down to pick up today's rose off my doorstep. What a week. On days like this I would prefer to sink into the luxurious velvet of my thoughts, but today my mind is an impassioned battle, aggravated by the haze that was crammed between my ears. It was not even my fault.

Roses…four of them so far. One every morning at the same time for the last four mornings. Since the temperature currently could discourage a glacier, the roses were always somewhat bendy, and the petals were always swollen and blushing with the humidity. I figured that if I was going to sink into reverie, I might as well be sitting, so I found a perch on the first concrete step leading to the front walk. It was already hot from the sun despite the early hour.

The rays on my closed eyelids were a gentle caress that sent a soft and somehow warm chill down my neck and spine. Leaning horizontally across my step, I propped myself up on the iron railing behind me. Once, when I was six or seven, I had managed to get my head stuck between the bars of that railing. The twisted ironwork punished me every time I attempted to slip my head back out back the way it came. My parents had yet to come home from dinner, and the babysitter, who thought I was with my little sister playing outside, was inside. Stuck there, I was surprisingly calm for my predicament, and I had a lot of time to think. Maybe too much time.

After staring pensively at the dirt that was positioned beneath my imprisoned head for a half hour or so, I came to a conclusion. People should be more colorful. Dirt should be more colorful. People don't sing enough, and rainbows are cowards, too fleeting and faint. People should plant more roses.

Roses! My ribbon of thoughts wound back to now. What was the deal with these roses? I traced one of the silky petals with my fingertips and examined the stem. I had a thought: these roses had no thorns.

My mind shut down even further. The heat was like a warm wine that replaced my blood with thick syrup. Inertia is a persuasive companion. Drifting off, something in my peripheral vision made me sit up quickly. There was a good-sized box, taller than it was wide and open at the top, sitting in the shadow of the wall at the bottom of the stairs. That definitely hadn't been there before.

Upon examining the box, I found a young rose plant inside. It had two tiny buds clawing at the sun and tufts of quivering leaves along the steam. I glanced up and was startled to meet the eyes of my neighbor, whom I had known forever. In response to the burning question printed across my face, he smiled knowingly and said, "After all, people should plant more roses.

- Marina Napoletano, V

SCIENCE

I was in the dungeons of the Countway Medical Library
searching for the fourth supplement issue of a medical journal from 1982 called
The Toxicologist.

It smelled like German books that no one had ever read,
(Most of the time I am the first person to touch the journals I'm sent for
their backs and fronts sticking to each other so I have to pull them down
which sometimes can be dangerous
force, pull, energy.)

And donuts. It always smells like donuts.

There was only one other person in the entire stacks
post-graduate shadows around the edges of shelves
even the driest of sports medicine concentrators seldom venture to the
scientific world existing pre-1985.

And I was cold, improbable because it was approaching 98 outside,
the humidity giving you the distinct effect that *there is no air b*ut down there
it felt like fall, which is nice because I was wearing corduroy.

I was kneeling on the ground because of course the only volumes Drs. H and M want are on the very bottom or very top shelves.

I am very short.

A half an hour earlier I was in the Russell Reading Room
(Current Periodicals,) asking a medical student in scrubs holding
The Economist to reach the July issue of
The American Journal of Epidemiology for me

not only because I am short but because
I have an interdepartmental mail folder full of reference lists
falling out onto my feet, my glasses stuck in my hair, a pen in my mouth
and I can't find the copy card which still has $94.50 on it.

He kindly untangles my glasses from my hair and puts them on the shelf next to
The American Journal of Bioethics which is kind of a weird invasion of
personal space, but then so is talking to someone in a library.

While I am bending down to stuff nineteen pages of references labeled
Pregs and *Phtalates,* he lays the
Am J Epid (ref. abrev. qkly bc/me automatic,) next to my glasses
and the pen where it sits drooling perilously close to someone's thesis.

"Research," he says, taking one of my folders and scanning an article. I peer over and see that it's the one about Ovulation and It's Decrease with Age as Relating to Fertility and Sterility in Swedish Women. "Yeah, thanks," I smile reaching out for the folder which he hands back. "Is this for a paper or something?" He sounds genuinely interested. I glance at the display on one of the computers nearby and see that it's almost time for me to turn my timesheet into a supreme debacle.

I always forget my social security number.

"Actually, it's for a study at the 812 lab. I'm just the research assistant. All I can tell you is it's got something to do with pregnancy, small aquatic organisms and Swedish people. Also possibly Polycystic Ovary Syndrome as a metaphor for Chaos theory." "Fascinating." (he is kidding.) "I know." I can tell that he knows I don't go to Harvard, which I appreciate, but this is one of those scenarios which seems almost made up. So made up you start to believe it actually happened no matter how benign it is. Even if it actually happened. Whatever.

The truth is: graduate students are vipers.

I am now standing in the copy room on L1.
I have pressed done on the swipe machine,
but I am reaching across the table for another journal
which I have (obviously) bookmarked.

A male (he looks nineteen, the only means of description I have is that he looks like a nineteen year-old, you know them) wearing a pink hoodie steps in front of the copy machine and swiftly punches in his code. I turn around. He looks at me. I smile, hugely. "Wow, you jacked me right there. Nice." He's not sure what to say. I move to the next machine and copy whilst watching the way 19's cheeks are turning the color of his hoodie.

Libraries amplify and amplify until your feet on the ground are too loud, your breath in the air makes you choke back thinking maybe you are disruptive and you start to creep around corners hoping no one will notice that you exist and if they talk to you it's like someone kicked you in the face because you forgot you had a voice, maybe, in the stacks all that matters are pages, the alphabet, making sure beverages are secured.

Again I'm on the ground in the reference section and Supplement four is not forthcoming.

It's money.

-Roisin Foley, II

Mismatched

for K

Maybe it wouldn't be so bad.

They'd known each other since high school. They hadn't ever really liked each other then, but maybe now it wouldn't be so bad. She tapped her pen lightly against her lips. She couldn't decide whether the answer was "a" or "b," nor could she decide whether her answer would be "yes" or "no."

If it had been any other day, any other friend, or any other party, she wouldn't have to worry so much. She'd simply not go. But as her best friend's 20th birthday neared, she knew she had to find a date. She sighed and circled an answer.

They were different people.
There was no way it could work.

Even though she was so sure she hated him, *so sure* she hated him fro his arrogance and his self-righteous nature, for his blind ignorance of others' abilities, and for the damn smirk that was ever-present on his pretentious face…she knew there was something more. It was clear to her that something linked them together. There had to be something that reminded her of her own flaws in him or she wouldn't hate him so obsessively.

She erased her answer. It didn't make sense. None of it made sense. Nothing indicated anything. There was no reason for her to be thinking about him when he hadn't shown the slightest indication that he acknowledged her existence.

There were millions of other choices,
But somehow…*all they could think of was one.*

Once again, she moved to erase her answer, but then faltered. As she quickly moved the pencil away from the paper, it slipped from her grasp. It rolled under her table, and he stopped it with his foot. Nonchalantly, he aimed it in her general direction. She snatched it midair and shot him a look. He smirked and leaned over his own paper. He could tell that she was burning holes in the back of his head, but what could he do? She was crazy, and he didn't see why he should have to humor her ridiculous fancies.

There was nothing special about her. She was average in every aspect. Her goals were too high and her self-esteem too low. She dwelled in some jacked up world of hope and kindness. He knew enough of her to not want to know about her. He knew he didn't want to waste his time with someone like her, someone who hated him for his confidence, someone who lived in the denial that people actually cared for other people. He didn't need compassion and he sure as hell didn't ask for it.

But the more he thought about her,
the more he realized...*just what he was missing.*

As they passed up their tests, the same thoughts flashed in both of their minds. She wondered if she had made the right decision, and he wished he'd had more time. He stood up, and they passed each other walking out the door, and in the brief moment their eyes met, it was as if their minds were made up for them.

Maybe it wouldn't be so bad...

Maybe it could even be right.

- Lisa Wang, IV

A Summer Haven

A response to "A Winter Eden" by Robert Frost

Clear summer skies above with shining sun
Herald a day of joyful play and fun.
In the field colts frolic with their mothers
And in the air sparrows court their lovers.

It is the time as close as it could be
To Eden's own blessed divinity.
It is the season of bountiful wealth,
And the emerald grass glows green with health.

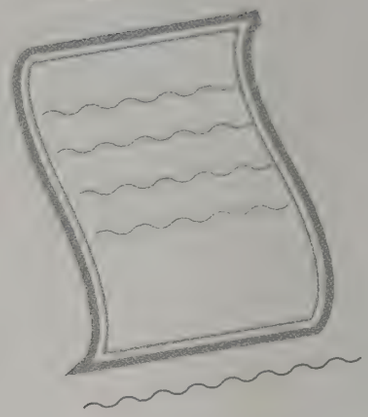
Near the babbling brook sleeps a red fox,
His rabbit-filled belly warmed by the rocks,
As this is a time kind to him and his kin
Before snow wipes from his face a sly grin.

Yet shadows still haunt a day of bright scenes,
For gray wolves stalk in between soft sunbeams.
Deep in the wood will fall a buck or doe,
Then to still sightless pups the pack shall go.

So shall life go on past the day's finish,
But it is long 'til light will diminish:
The sun has only just reached its highest mark
And it is hours hence to full starry dark.

- Aurora Baker, II

A full, *comprehensive* list from 419 Pond Street to Boston Latin School



First thing you'll need is a good, solid helmet. Notice I did not say bike. You could be riding a real junker, but as long as you have two wheels, a chain and a helmet, you're set. Other optional investments include a set of gloves, saddlebags and a sturdy lock, unless, of course, you chose to ride the aforementioned junker.

Put on your gloves, helmet and anything else you might want to wear, and bring your bike outside. Apply a rubber band or velcro lettuce tie to the bottom of your right jean pant-leg if you do not want it to tear in the gears of the bike. Stuff your recently filled water bottle into it's holder along the body of the bike. Leave yourself at least sixteen minutes to arrive at your destination, more if you want to go at a leisurely pace. Be sure to look both ways before crossing over Pond Street, it is quite busy in the mornings. After all, you wouldn't want to ruin your new helmet in the first five minutes of your ride.

Proceed down steep Pond Street, don't forget to shift your gears up so that you can attain maximum speed on the downhill, and carefully take one hand off the handlebars to throw a curt good morning wave at Mrs. Kelley's house. Be careful not to let any cars swipe you, but it shouldn't be much of a problem, since you are traveling at roughly the same speed.

You should however begin to worry as you near Jamaica Pond, because while you are soon going to be in the clear, you now have to pass around a traffic circle, and these rabid Boston drivers have probably not yet had enough morning coffee. After painstakingly crossing this perilous passageway, you are now free to accelerate as much as you'd like, as your route hugs the outskirts of scenic Jamaica Pond. Just try not to breathe in too many fumes from the idling cars on the Jamaicaway. For a cinematic experience, glance at the ground down to your left to see your graceful silhouette rapidly traveling over the grassy sidewalks. If only you could operate a camera, too! Know the rules of the road, when you want to pass the inevitable other commuter, always alert them to your presence right behind them. Don't feel bad when they pass you again two minutes later after you have run out of steam.

You should check your watch when you come to the red light, at Perkins Street, as you are destined to do, in order to mark your progress and note how much time you will need to make up on the second major downhill, which follows along the heart of the Emerald Necklace. If you wanted, you could take it all the way from Franklin Park to the Boston Common. This beautiful urban greenspace was designed by Franklin Law Olmstead, a famous American landscape architect of the late 19th century. Note the sloping grass-covered hills and the walls of trees. Beware of the many geese that overpopulate the area and are probably going to try to cross the path in front of you (brains the size of walnuts, you know). Swerve liberally. With the exception of the minefields of goose-dropping, this park is your best friend because it provides a car-free segment to your otherwise harried ride. Ride over the last hill of the Necklace, and peer over at Route 9. You are soon to cross it.

The most successful method for crossing an inner-city state-highway is go halfway while the cars are stuck in traffic, almost like a low-risk game of Frogger, and then traverse the other side in the moments between when cars pass. After this comes the closest shave you'll have all morning, squeezing in between the vehicles parked to your right and the cars whizzing by to your left on Brookline Ave., rushing to get to the hospital district.

Simply pedal onward and faithfully, and try not to look behind you. When you reach the end, carefully weave in between the cars and perch yourself on the sidewalk, safe for now. When the light turns green and the cars lurch across the Jamaicaway, follow their lead, and take a right turn to cut behind various hospitals, again, taking care to avoid getting clipped by cars and their dangerous doors. Cruise up this hill behind Childrens' Hospital, and down another until you reach Longwood Ave. Here, feel free to pedal your little feet off in order to beat the slow stream of traffic and show them in the end just who is the boss of the road. Make a theatrical, sweeping turn into Ave. Louis Pasteur and go past the food truck and awe-struck students and hop onto the sidewalk just to wake up a few darting pedestrians. Lightly tap the break as you near the bike racks at the front of the school, and doff your helmet at Mr. Fulton as you greet him, and acrobatically hop off the seat, guiding the bike to its final position. Stash your gloves and helmet in a saddlebag pocket and take a well-earned swig of water from your bottle. I certainly hope you remembered to bring the key for the lock after all that riding.

-Ari Klickstein, II

May 10, 1999

Little knickknacks
Remnants of your presence
Little cream-colored automobile
Compilation
Eight years of use and fatigue
The memories so little
The pain tenfold
I've learned to live and forget
Unhitch the past and travel on
Old-fashioned car chase
Pain –
a leech organic glue
Pursues its place in my
Heart –
Surface punctured
Layers unraveled
Core entrenched
A sanctuary
Who receives pain with open arms
And there it lies.

-Chi Lan Trinh, IV

Nostalgia

Nostalgia

I splash into the very edge of the water, soaking my stubby legs in swishing, salty water. The waves roll, gently undulating in mesmerizing repetition, and screeching at the biting cold of the sea, I gleefully hop over wave over wave. When each wave is sucked back into the deep waters, as if the sea is yawning, I stand as still as possible and allow my pudgy feet to sink as far into the mushy sand as possible. Eventually, my small, toddler feet will be sunk so far in that I will have to sit down, letting the waves wash lazily over me, and dig into the gritty sand in order to free myself.

My favorite part is the sand, feeling it being squished between my toes and fingers in spongy, satisfactory, slushy ooze. Eventually, when I can't stand the freezing water temperatures another second, I dash away from the rolling waters, into the fluffy warmth of a waiting Little Mermaid towel. I stay that way for at least an hour, shivering, blue-lipped, clutching it around my shoulders and crunching on Goldfish.

When I am finally warm, I roll in the sun-kissed golden sand, letting it stick to my pale skin, and soon I am a monster of gritty, grainy sand. I trail my mother excitedly, walking in the very edge of the water, watching intently for interesting seashells or rocks. The jackpot find is sea glass; little bits of glass, worn down and smoothed by the sea's constant yawning and crashing. When I find a piece, I snatch it, screeching in delight, from the sea's grasp, and call to my mother triumphantly. Later, we will gather our newfound treasures and carry them home in buckets, plastic bags, even in our pockets.

Soon, I know, my parents will announce that we can only stay five more minutes; start to pack up! I will pout my lips and beg in devastated tones for ten more minutes, instead. And when the ten minutes is up, I will attempt to bargain for another give; another three, two, just one more minute! But eventually we must pack up the blankets and the half-eaten bags of snacks, and crowd into the red minivan. I will turn back one more time, sitting on the soggy towel to keep the seats from getting too dirty, and say a silent goodbye to the rolling waves and swishing sand, the broken seashells and the jagged sea glass. I know I'll be back in the years to come, each year a little different than the last; each year losing a little more of its youthful easiness. Eventually, I'll move away, far away from here, and the beach will have to fill up with new families, and more exuberant children. Maybe I'll come back one day, all grown up, with a family of my own and watch my own child jump through the waves, and run triumphantly to me with a treasure trove of rocks and seashells. But for now, I'll keep those youthful days faithfully wrapped in my heart, gathering dusk, and growing blurry with time.

- Elizabeth Mahony, V

Laments of the Heavenly Maiden

Inspired by The Feathered Robe by David Brauns

I pleaded to you, I want to return!
For the heavens, my homeland, I truly yearned
But I could not fly without my feathered robe
Which you hid somewhere on this globe

Please return them, and let me go free,
To the celestial skies, I wish to be.
I miss them, my family, friends, and kin.
My laments surely is not a sin

I loved you, and blessed you, but all is now lost.
And leaving you is the final cost.
For you bind me to this earthly land,
My freedom held captive in your hand.

Each time I asked you, you would turn away,
"Don't be ridiculous," you would say.
How I cried and begged at your reply,
Without my robes, I could not fly.

You once said that all you wanted from me
Was my smile, my laughter, my love, and glee
The heavens called me, my heart and soul,
But even then you would not let me go.

I searched for my robe, day and night
Till I heard a sound, clear but slight
Our children were singing a familiar song
Of a feathered robe, and where it belonged

I found it, and quickly slipped it on
I spread my wings and lifted towards dawn
I looked down once more at the fading earth
The place of our meeting and children's birth

Forgive me, but here in the sky is where I belong,
Even on earth, I had known all along
Do not feel sorrow, for you I still adore
and I shall watch over this world—forevermore.

-Yunwei Sun, IV

KYLE ALMIGHTY

The closest I've ever come to religion was worshipping a two-year-old boy. His name was Kyle, and he was God to me. Some god of mischief maybe, but god nonetheless. I lived in constant fear that Kyle would one day turn to me and strike me down, and yet I desperately wanted to be near him as much as possible. I wouldn't say that I was ever really friends with Kyle, but I watched him from a corner in awe as he scaled the shelves and pulled down the store of lollipops. I quietly stood by as our warm substitute mommy chuckled, scooped him up, and gently scolded him. I squatted across the room and blatantly stared with my big, toddler eyes as he sat in Time Out. He looked like the most powerful king to me; to any adult nearby he looked like a small boy in the center of a huge, brown, leather armchair, his feet barely reaching the end of the seat. He had yet to develop any sense of shame for being punished, and I had yet to develop any sense of shame for staring.

Although Kyle knew what he wanted and was determined to get it, I wouldn't necessarily say he was spoiled, because he was always willing to get it for himself. If he saw something he wanted, a toy or a candy, he'd seize it. If he was in the mood for a particular snack, he'd set to work preparing it. One day, Kyle decided he wanted cereal. While Maureen hummed in the next room over as she changed some unfortunate kid's dirty diaper, Kyle began gathering his ingredients. Maureen had just gone shopping, and Kyle quickly retrieved a new box of Cheerios from the cabinet and a gallon of milk from the fridge. He then got a spoon, but conveniently forgot a bowl. I watched silently as he proceeded to pour the entire box of Cheerios onto the floor. Next, he submerged the kitchen in a deluge of milk. He calmly stooped down and began to devour his creation.

I don't think that I ever actually talked to Kyle (as much as two-year olds talk), but I certainly did talk about him. Once, as a present from my parents, my older sister got a baby doll. She named her doll Sarah and dutifully fed it a bottle each night. Once, as a present to myself, I stole my sister's doll. I named my baby Kyle, and dragged it all over the house. My sister was irritated that I'd stolen her doll, but she was even more outraged that in my ignorance I'd switched its gender. Over and over again she would remove Kyle's pink pajamas, point to the area between "his" legs, and repeat in frustration, "See Molly, she's a girl. No peepee. Her name is Sarah."

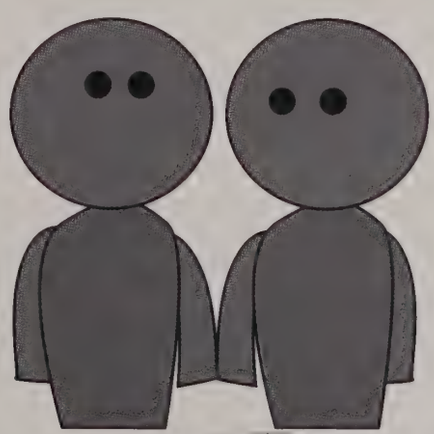
I would stare fixedly at the doll with the furrowed brow, tilt my chin to look up at her, and reply, "Uh-uh. Kyle."

This back and forth went on for hours, as I slowly drove my sister crazy. She couldn't let me go on with this misconception, and I simply didn't care.

Kyle's cousin was a girl several years older than us, named Julia, and my admiration spread to her as well. Julia frequently went away to visit her grandmother in New Jersey. I had never been to New Jersey, and it quickly evolved into paradise in my mind. New Jersey was a place where everything was colorful, where flowers were as big as houses, where bunny rabbits gave rides on their backs, and where ice cream was handed out in the streets. I became obsessed, and while some people's dream is to go to Greece or Europe, mine was to go to New Jersey. My parents could have taken me, but I think they were just too afraid to see my imagination and faith dashed on the boring, grey, cement streets.

Fifteen years have passed, and I have no idea what ever happened to Kyle, or Julia, or to tell you the truth, even "Sarah" (although "she's" probably sitting at the bottom of some pile in my attic). I'm still the same quiet observer, but the world I observe is so different these days. All the Kyles of the world would get sent to prison now instead of to a big, comfy chair. I rarely have time to eat breakfast in the morning, and if I do spare a couple of minutes for Cheerios before dragging myself to the bus, they always come in a bowl. Gender confusion is enough to get you beat up or ostracized. New Jersey is a place full of pollution and weeds. People who worship little boys are creepy priests or aging pop stars. The world is different now.

- Molly Goodkind, II



In Memoriam

When I first walked in, she was already lying there, a porcelain doll on display. I couldn't help but notice all the white that surrounded her: the opaque shawl draped across her shoulders, the pristine headrest supporting her neck and head, and the vanilla mat board bordering her portrait. I almost chuckled; black had always been her favorite color.

Feet shuffled on the carpeted floor, first to the pictures, next to the Memories book, then finally to her. Holding a bouquet of fresh roses and a sympathy card enclosing the only picture I had ever taken of her – she hated cameras – I trembled long before coming close to the front of the line. With bated breath, I stepped solemnly onto the stage where our final goodbye was exchanged.

Many people have described the body's renewal behind the formaldehyde curtain as an amazing transformation, one that takes the bleak image of death, and, in a pseudo-celestial manner, molds it into a façade of serenity and rest. Here, the attempted preservation of her corpse was a disgrace to her memory.

The gel pulling back the hair from her face was flaking. The mounds of foundation plastered over her skin failed to conceal the blue and purple bruises that flowered across her forehead, nose, and cheekbones. Between her lips weaved a transparent, barely visible thread, forever sealing that hollow, soulless expression. The flaps of skin folding over her neck gave her the wrinkles of an elderly gentlewoman who had passed in her sleep.

But she was only sixteen. She had been beautiful; she should have been beautiful then, but death declared otherwise. No, death had no say in this – just massive head trauma and major blood loss.

The fact that I couldn't have offered her any relief during her last moments of life haunted me as I slowly knelt beside her casket. Her mother, recognizing me, came over and placed my hand over her daughter's with a reassuring squeeze. The touch of flesh cold and hard as ice made me cringe. A part of me still could not believe that she was dead. When I closed my eyes to pray, I felt her mother's hand above my own. The warmth permeated through skin to skin to skin, until the hand beneath mine felt warm, too.

When I looked up, I saw the first genuine smile I had seen since the accident. "You know Stephanie isn't hurting anymore." I responded with a smile of my own, and instinctively whispered, "I know the worst is over."

A year had passed before I realized that "the worst" was neither the wake, nor the funeral, nor the death itself. It was the Monday mornings I was too groggy to greet her, the Friday afternoons I left school without saying goodbye. It was the missed phone calls I never returned, the notes slipped into my locker I never responded to. It was the smile I never took time to appreciate.

Since then, I have never taken another smile for granted.

- Jessica Pan, I

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4	jamilyah richardson
9	cynthia poon
12	anonymous
16	jake graham-felsen
19	tony huang
23	jake graham-felsen
29	ari klickstein
34	nicole bush
39	amy sun
40	beverly nguyen
(background) 41	anonymous
43	huong phan
46	janet calcaterra
art credits	ari klickstein
inside back cover	susan shian
back cover	giselle eng